


From: The BrightWines Beacon 
Subject: new picks from Paso Robles, Mendocino, and Contra Costa
Date: June 10, 2026 at 12:02 PM
To: The BrightWines Beacon newsletter

TB

The BrightWines Beacon for June 5th, 2026

How much fun can we pack into one week of summer, one month, one weekend? PLENTY is the answer. Just since Monday June 1st, I myself have seen one Saints game, helped out on one backyard paver project, had beers at a brewpub in St Paul, attended a First Avenue concert, and will be going to the Guthrie tomorrow. I'm also hoping to squeeze in an album-release party and check out Grand Old Days this weekend too. Here in North St Paul, the first Friday-night classic car show of the season is tonight too. And yet somehow all of that seems like it's just a regular week of summer here in the Twin Cities. From pole-to-pole of Memorial Day weekend thru Labor Day weekend, the summer of 2026 is the longest possible summer we can have "on the calendar" and I hope we all make the most of it!

So in case you are wondering how much WINE we can pack into one week of summer, here's just a **quick rundown for this weekend at BrightWines... by the numbers!!**

by the numbers... 94 (days left in the summer of 2026)

by the numbers... 91 (Wine Enthusiast rating for my new oak Chardonnay from **Mendocino**)

by the numbers... 24 (bottles of new "affordable luxury" dry whites from Italy and Austria; **Gruner Veltiner & Fiano**)

by the numbers... 7 (cases of **Paso Robles** Cabernet smart-buy arrived yesterday)

by the numbers... 5 (new or restocked **dry Roses**: from Provence, Tavel, Mendocino, Germany, and Vinho Verde)

by the numbers... 3 (bbq-friendly "**red blends**" including "Gather at Three" from Contra Costa)

The HIGHLIGHTS of the new arrivals and top picks this week include Smart-buys in Cabernet Sauvignon from **Paso Robles**, and from old vines vineyards north of Sonoma in **Mendocino** we have Pinot Noir and Chardonnay and a perfect pink, plus from **Contra Costa County** old vines there is complex and classy Red Blend. Read today's *Bright Lights* section for all the details!

BRIGHT LIGHTS: new picks from Paso Robles, Mendocino, and Contra Costa

**** Smart Buy Cabernet Sauvignon from PASO ROBLES ****

TRUE MYTH 2023 Paso Robles CABERNET SAUVIGNON @ \$17.99 per bottle

Suggested Retail: \$20 (Tasting Panel) Case Price: \$199.99 = \$16.67 each, mix/match

As the winery notes suggest, "**this Cabernet is pure Paso Robles**, full of polished aromas of blueberry, cherry and vanilla, leading to flavors of dark red fruits, black currants and hints of pepper, mocha and caramelized oak. **Rich yet smooth, this wine is very approachable now, and will continue to mature.**" And James Suckling recommends it, as does Tasting Panel, with tasting notes that concur, saying "dark cherries and black raspberry cobbler precede a plush yet tannin-framed palate with enough cocoa powder, warm vanilla and cedar to add depth to the cassis that rolls through the finish. Drink or hold." (J.S.)

**** Smart Buy "rhone ranger" style Red Blend from Contra Costa County old vines ****

"GATHER AT THREE" 2023 Contra Coast County Red Blend @ \$15.99 per bottle

(Matt Cline, Three Vineyards) CASE PRICE: **\$14.99 ea** (\$179.88/case)

This is the **new/current vintage of a nifty California Rhone-ranger by Matt Cline** at "Three" winery. **Cotes du Rhone fans will recognize the style** he's going for! This is a lighter bodied, oak-barreled blend of **57% Carignane**, 24% Zinfandel, 15% Petite Sirah, and 4% Mataro/Mourvedre from old vines vineyards in Contra Costa county. The focus is on red fruits, good spice, and a lighter-to-medium body that would make an ideal grilling red for everything from burgers to chops to roasted vegetables. The label and name for this wine are inspired by an original artwork painting of the tasting room at Three.

**** Smart Buys for Pinot Noir and Chardonnay, plus Affordable Luxury dry Rose, from MENDOCINO ****

The NEW LABELS look great on this longstanding California winemaker-driven brand!

Tortoise Creek 2024 organic (oaked) Mendocino Chardonnay @ \$14.99 per bottle

Case Price: \$159.99 (\$13.33 each, mix/match)

Rated 91 points Wine Enthusiast, who says: "The aromatics are rich and bright, with notes of Golden Delicious apple, Asian pear, citrus, and notes of orange blossom on the nose. The flavors on the palate are White nectarine, orange zest, and vanilla cream, with good mineral and acidity on the finish. 91 rating." (Wine Enthusiast)

Tortoise Creek 2023 organic (oaked) Mendocino Pinot Noir @ \$14.99 per bottle

Case Price: \$159.99 (\$13.33 each, mix/match)

note: the 2022 vintage rated 90 points Wine Enthusiast, but the new 2023 has not yet been reviewed

Winemaker notes: medium garnet-colored wine presents enticing aromas of dried cranberry, sweet rhubarb, and subtle hints of cinnamon and nutmeg. On the palate, flavors of delicate caramel, bright red cherries. Made in a food-friendly burgundian style, yet has all the smooth ripeness of California too.

FROG'S LEAP Grenouille Rougante 2025 **Mendocino dry Rose @ \$21.99 per bottle**

"the blushing frog" This famous and beloved Napa Valley name offers a clever dry Rose that is **meant to emulate Provence in general and Bandol in particular, using Carignane from Mendocino** and I have to say they nailed it!! The winery notes say that "The entire ranch seemed to be poised to make great rosé, and our traditional blocks on the high side of the ranch had **a tremendous amount of flavor and character in 2025**. Cranberry, pomegranate and cherry aromas on the nose provide the initial hit of Cali sunshine, while racy acidity and a mineral tang from the old vines announces a rose with some serious backbone to it." I totally agree. This is the best California Rose I've tasted so far this season.

All these new picks, and MORE, are IN-STOCK NOW... including the other new arrivals and wines mentioned above in "by the numbers" (dry Roses, Gruner Veltliner, Fiano, bbq-friendly red blends) so be sure to INQUIRE with Dave (just reply to this newsletter) or stop in at BrightWines this Saturday, or next week!

Cheers to the summer of 2026 in Minnesota, we deserve a great one!! —Dave

The Right Wines are BrightWines!

2420 Margaret Street
North Saint Paul, MN 55109
651.748.0793 (office landline)